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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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AM: 0790428-0597

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ADS-00 SES-01 SSN-02 CIAE-00
DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00
HA-05 SY-05 SYE-00 MCT-02 USSS-00 PH-06 SP-02
SS-15 H-01 INR-10 PA-01 ANAE-00 /084 W.
-----030924 191311Z /46

O R 191141Z SEP 79
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5692
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIJING
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
CINCPAC

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY *[Signature]* DATE 8/1/84

FOR MR. ROBERTO, DARS

IN WASH.

DATE

BY

DATE

BY

DATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 7009

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12065: RDS-4 9/19/99 (FLATIN, BRUCE A.) OR-M
TAGS: SOPN, PIR, PINS, AF
SUBJ: (LOU) FORMER AFGHAN PRESIDENT TARAKI IS PROBABLY STILL ALIVE

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. THE EMBASSY HAS RECENTLY NOTED SEVERAL REPORTS IN THE
WORLD PRESS THAT FORMER PRESIDENT NOOR MOHAMMAD TARAKI IS
SAID TO HAVE "DIED OF HIS GUNSHOT WOUNDS ON SEPTEMBER 18."
MOST OF THESE STORIES APPEAR TO HAVE STEMMED FROM A FRENCH
NEWS AGENCY REPORT (AN AFP REPORTER HAS BEEN IN KABUL DURING
RECENT DAYS).

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3. THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT TARAKI IS STILL ALIVE -- AT

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LEAST OF THIS DATE, SEPTEMBER 19. LOCAL AFGHAN SOURCES WHOM WE REGARD AS RELIABLE HAVE STATED THAT TARAKI IS ALIVE AND BEING KEPT AT A GOVERNMENT REST HOUSE. AN EASTERN EUROPEAN AMBASSADOR GAVE THIS SAME INFORMATION TO OUR CHARGE ON SEPTEMBER 19.

4. WHATEVER THE TRUTH, HOWEVER, MOST AFGHANS BELIEVE THAT TARAKI IS DEAD. INDEED, THE AFP REPORT REFLECTS ONE OF THE RUMORS OFTEN HEARD HERE. HIS PICTURES HAVE DISAPPEARED -- AND HIS NAME IS RAPIDLY FADING OUT OF EARSHOT. PRESIDENT HAFIZULLAH AMIN DID NOT REFER TO HIS PREDECESSOR BY NAME IN HIS MAIDEN PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS OF SEPTEMBER 17 -- AND MIGHT ELECT TO CONTINUE THIS STRATEGY OF CRITICIZING HIS FORMER "GREAT TEACHER" ONLY OBLIQUELY FOR "PAST MISTAKES." WHEN TARAKI EVENTUALLY PASSES ON, THE KHALQI REGIME, FOLLOWING MANY AFGHAN PRECEDENTS, MAY BURY HIM QUIETLY AND NOT MAKE ANY OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT. BECAUSE HE HAS ALREADY "DIED" ONCE, THE LOCAL RUMOR MILL MAY NOT PICK UP THAT EVENT WHEN IT OCCURS. AMSTUTZ

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